

organizations of its kind. The members of this organization, and their families, have made innumerable sacrifices in order to help future generations of Americans. Furthermore, many of the members of Local 845 have served in the armed forces for our great nation. These individuals have demonstrated impeccable American values, and have participated in countless works of charity. The Union has stood as the backbone of thousands upon thousands of its members by providing decent wages, and a better standard of living for themselves and their loved ones.

Mr. Speaker, as a carpenter myself, I know that Local No. 845 has benefitted the Philadelphia community, and will continue to do so for years to come. On its 100th anniversary, members of the Local 845 are leading through example by hard work and dedication. They have been the pioneers for the working class, and will continue to make new advancements and achievements through their endurance, commitment, and leadership.

TRIBUTE TO BOB AND GAY
SMITHER

HON. NICK LAMPSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 13, 2001

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to congratulate my constituents, Bob and Gay Smither, on receiving the Texas Young Lawyers Association Liberty Bell Award on behalf of their work with the Laura Recovery Center Foundation. I couldn't think of two more worthy people to receive this award.

I met the Smithers just over four years ago, after the disappearance of their daughter, Laura Kate. Sadly, Laura's body was recovered a couple of weeks later. The Smithers chose to turn this terrible tragedy into something positive, the founding of the Laura Recovery Center. It is because of Laura and her parents' inspiration, that I founded the Congressional Caucus on Missing and Exploited Children.

Through this harrowing experience, we have learned of thousands of families who suffer this same tragedy every year in this nation. Bob and Gay have dedicated their lives to protecting our children and keeping our families safe. So many in their community worked so hard to bring Laura home that I can't imagine a stronger outpouring of love and support by a community.

The Smithers have told me that they intend to accept it on behalf of all of their volunteers. This is just one more indication of their commitment to their community and their selflessness—they choose to share this honor rather than accept it only on behalf of themselves.

The Foundation has recently received Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education certification for their training program on rapid response to child abduction and have been invited to present monthly training courses at the Houston Police Academy and Galveston County Sheriff's Department.

I am honored to call Bob and Gay Smither my constituents, and am honored that they have been selected to receive the Liberty Bell Award.

HONORING CENTRAL
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 13, 2001

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 150th Anniversary of "The First German Evangelical Lutheran Church," presently known as Central Congregational Church, located at 1311 Holman, Houston, Texas. In 1851, Pastor Casper Braun arrived in Houston to help German speaking settlers transition to their new home. He was responsible for founding the congregation in September of 1851.

Over the years, the church has built three permanent facilities; a white wooden colonial style structure, a red brick building with a Gothic style white sandstone trim, and its most recent structure, built in 1927, a tan brick with red terra cotta roof directly from northern Italy. The church currently houses the Houston chapter of Habitat for Humanity and the Houston Graduate School of Theology, and is also responsible for financing five new Lutheran churches in the Houston area.

The 87 members of the Central Congregational Church, under the leadership of Pastor Dr. W. Clark Chamberlain have been involved in many community outreach programs in hopes of attracting new parishioners. Since 1975, Central Congregational Church has participated in the Christian Community Services Center of Houston. This service organization is an interfaith alliance of more than three dozen congregations, who work together for betterment of the community. The alliance provides job training, job placement, emergency relief, clothes, back-to-school programs, a thrift shop, day care services, and delivers meals to senior citizens who are shut in. Currently, the church prepares more than 100 meals a day for home-bound individuals.

Mr. Speaker, the Central Congregational Church has a long history of faithful service to the Houston area. The tireless efforts of the leaders and parishioners at Central Congregational Church has made them a shining example for other community groups to emulate. I applaud the parish and its members for their commitment to the community and wish them success in the forthcoming years.

TRIBUTE TO MARCEL GROEN

HON. JOSEPH M. HOFFEL

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 13, 2001

Mr. HOFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Marcel Groen of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. Marcel has been awarded the first Mark E. Goldberg Memorial Award which recognizes individuals for their commitment to Jewish culture and civic life and also for participating in the Israel Bonds Program. The Mark E. Goldberg Memorial Award was established in memory of Mark E. Goldberg and his strong devotion to the Jewish community.

Marcel is a founding partner in the law firm of Groen, Laveson, Goldberg & Rubenstone in Bensalem, Pennsylvania. He is extremely active in his community as a former chairman of

the Bucks County International Trade Council, a board member of the Bucks County Male Teen Conference, and he was former counsel to the Lower Bucks County Chamber of Commerce. Marcel has served as a special counsel to numerous municipalities and their agencies.

Marcel has long been an active supporter of the Democratic party. He is the Chairman of the Montgomery County Democratic Committee and is a member of the Pennsylvania Democratic State Committee. He was also the former Finance Chairman of the Bucks County Democratic Committee.

Marcel has dedicated much time and efforts to Jewish causes. He is an officer of the board of Beth Shalom Congregation, served as past-president of the Philadelphia ORT and the Bucks County Jewish National Fund, and a former vice president and board member of the Philadelphia Solomon Schechter Day School.

Marcel and his wife Bernice are the proud parents of four children: Marlon, Jennifer, Rachel, and Justin. Their family also includes son-in-law Ami Dolev and future son-in-law, Elad Yagur.

Marcel is my close friend. He is a good man committed to public service and civic leadership. I am pleased to congratulate Marcel for this distinguished award.

THE SAVINGS FOR WORKING
FAMILIES ACT

HON. JOSEPH R. PITTS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 13, 2001

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, the last decade has seen some of the greatest prosperity in American history. This has provided new opportunities not only for the savvy Wall Street investor, but also for those who are gainfully employed for the first time. And while some economic indicators are down a bit, we still have a great opportunity to help those who once had few opportunities. We have the chance to help them find new ways to gain a permanent foothold in the financial mainstream.

Today, Congressman Charlie Stenholm and 33 other bipartisan cosponsors are joining me to re-introduce The Savings For Working Families Act. This legislation will provide tax credits to banks providing matching funds for Individual Development Account (IDA) savings. IDAs are savings accounts that may be used for education, housing, or to start a small business.

IDAs are a proven success in my home state of Pennsylvania. For example, Jacqui Fulton, a 66-year-old woman from Philadelphia told the Philadelphia Daily News recently that when she used to get depressed about her circumstances, she would raid the cookie jar where she kept her money and go buy herself a manicure. It made her feel better for a short time. But now, she goes to the bank every week and deposits another twenty dollars into her IDA account. She now says that she "almost skips to the bank"—it makes her feels so good. Jacqui started saving in her IDA account in July of 1997. She saved over 12 hundred dollars and received her saving match of six hundred dollars in August of 1999. She